

A SERIOUS AND PLAIN 4323. L

DISCOURSE

CONCERNING

BAPTISM,

IN ITS CONNECTION WITH
THE FIRST PRINCIPLES AND SPIRIT OF

CHRISTIANITY:

WHEREIN

The *Rite* itself is carefully and distinctly pointed out;

ITS

Scriptural *Subjects* clearly and fully ascertained;

AND ITS

Import and *Design*, or the *Doctrine* it implies or represents,

Calmly and Honestly delineated.

WRITTEN ORIGINALLY IN THE

WELSH LANGUAGE,

AND ADDRESSED TO

The Candid, the Dispassionate, and the Inquisitive,

AMONG THE

PÆDOBAPTISTS OF THE PRINCIPALITY.

Now rendered into English with some Additions.

BY WILLIAM RICHARDS.

Search the Scriptures. Whofo readeth, let him understand. I speak
as to wise men, judge ye what I say.

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and D. TAYLOR, in *Union-Street, Bishopgate-Street*.

*From the Author
by Dr. Edwards
TO*

WILLIAM WILLIAMS, ESQUIRE,

OF CARDIGAN,

*One of the Deputy Lieutenants, and Justices of the Peace,
for the Counties of Cardigan and Pembroke,*

(To whose Approbation and Encouragement the following Thoughts, in a great measure owe their appearance in Print, first in the Welsh, and now in the English Language) In Testimony of great respect to an amiable and eminent Character, and of warm attachment to a beloved Friend,



THIS DISCOURSE

IS INSCRIBED

BY HIS AFFECTIONATE,

AND FAITHFUL SERVANT,

THE AUTHOR.

P R E F A C E.

MANY among the most moderate of our Deists pretend to admit, and even to admire, the purity and beauty of the New Testament *Morality*, while they affect, with an air of absolute infallibility, to reject and revile every thing in that book that is of a ritual nature—the following Treatise, it is hoped, will convince every candid and rational reader, that the Christian Ordinance of *Baptism* is neither inconsistent, nor yet unconnected with that *Morality*; but is, in fact, not only quite consistent with it, but likewise evidently designed and calculated to cultivate and promote it.

Among professing Christians too, who express the highest regard for the *Priesthood* of Christ, and those doctrines of the Gospel which are more immediately connected with that part of our Saviour's Character, not a few are to be found who do not hesitate to speak very lightly of the ordinances and many of the precepts of the New Testament.—The ensuing Discourse may serve to remind such, that Jesus Christ is the *King* and *Prophet* of his people, as well as their *High Priest*; and ought to be no less regarded by them in the former characters than in the latter. And as the ordinances and precepts of the Gospel are in very deed the Commandments of Christ—the Commandments of him whose death and intercession they would be thought so highly to estimate, it must be a most unworthy, and a very unaccountable conduct in them to treat those ordinances and precepts with such glaring indifference.—It surely can but very ill accord with those words of his, “If ye love me, keep my commandments.”

Others

Others again, who allow, in so many words, that Jesus Christ is the *Prophet* and *King*, as well as the *Priest* of his Church, and, of course, that his laws and ordinances ought to be observed by his people, yet appear not to see the necessity or obligation of abiding by, or conforming to, the plain tenor, or obvious meaning of his laws and precepts, or of strictly adhering to the practice and example of the Apostles and primitive Christians: Hence they pay as much, and often far greater regard to a mutilated corrupt rite, which retains of Christ's institution but the mere name, than they do to the real precepts and ordinances of the New Testament.—To these it is seriously recommended to consider the case of the *Corinthians*, who for departing in some circumstances from the primitive rule and example, in the administration of the Lord's Supper, were most sharply reproved, and required, at their peril, to relinquish the corrupt practice, and restore the ordinance to its original state—Let them also consider those words of our Saviour—"Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the thing which I say?—Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you—Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you, and lo I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen."

SERIOUS AND PLAIN
DISCOURSE, &c.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN AND COUNTRYMEN,

IN order to form a just idea, or exhibit a right statement of the Divine Ordinance of Baptism, we ought to consider it, as indeed we should do every other Christian Institution, in its connection with the Gospel, or with pure and unadulterated Christianity.

By the GOSPEL I understand, The glad Tidings of the Love of God in Christ to Mankind; or The good News of the fulfilment of the ancient promise and prophecies, in the coming, life, death, resurrection and exaltation of the Son of God, and the Salvation he hath thereby obtained for Sinners of all nations; or, in other words, it is The Assurance given from Heaven, that God hath so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

The principal or leading doctrine of the Gospel is this, "That Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God;"—in contradistinction, or opposition, not only to the ideas of his professed enemies, who despise, and reject, and mock him, but also to those of others, who under a profession of great veneration for him, esteem him *a good man*, such as John the Baptist, Elias, Jeremias, or one of the Prophets:—and not any thing more than that.

Had the Blessed Jesus been no more than a good man, or a Prophet, such as John the Baptist, Elias,
A Jeremias,

Jeremias, and the like, he could never have sustained the character, or borne the appellation of EMMANUEL, *God with us, The Word which was God tabernacling among us, God manifested in the flesh, and he who is over all God blessed for ever* :—neither would he have accepted *divine worship*, which the best of men, the most eminent Apostles and Prophets, and even the Holy Angels themselves refused with the utmost displeasure and abhorrence.

If the Jewish worshipper was taught to direct his divine adoration towards the ancient Temple at Jerusalem, much more, and in a far more exalted sense, may the Christian worshipper direct his adoration towards the Blessed Jesus, the unspeakably more glorious Temple of Jehovah, where his perfections shine forth with a splendor infinitely surpassing every thing that was ever seen in the ancient Jewish Tabernacle or Temple ; seeing that in him all the fulness of the Godhead dwells bodily.—So that we need not wonder, that all the Angels of God are required to worship him.

This doctrine, That Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God, is in fact the very foundation of Christianity : Hence our Lord says, “ On this rock will I build my Church, and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it ;” which implies, That visible Christianity should be built on a personal belief and profession of this truth. Agreeably with this did the primitive teachers require a confession of this same fundamental article from all those who wished to cleave unto them, or to be numbered among the disciples of Jesus.—“ I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God,” said the Eunuch. On this confession Philip admitted him to Baptism : And of the same sort, doubtless, was the initiating confession of all the primitive converts. We have no reason to imagine, that there were any, either young or old, in the Apostolic age, who passed for Christians, till they had made an express open avowal of the above doctrine.

Almost the whole Bible is designed to illustrate and enforce this same great truth.—The Prophecies and
Types

Types of the Old Testament foreshewed and prefigured a Christ to come : The writings of the Apostles and Evangelists in the New Testament declare and affirm, that the Christ is actually come, and that Jesus of Nazareth is the very person. This the Jews obstinately and maliciously denied : but Jesus fully proved it—by the testimony of John the Baptist, whom they would be thought so highly to reverence—by the miracles which he himself wrought—by the Father's voice from Heaven—And, by the Scriptures of the Old Testament. John v. 32; 33, 35.—36.—37, 38. 39, 45, 46, 47. and John i. 15, 27. Matt. iii. 17.

For pretending, or laying claim to this, Jesus was persecuted, apprehended, arraigned, condemned, and executed on the cross, as the vilest of malefactors : but his resurrection from the dead was a demonstration from God, that he was, indeed, as he had said, the promised CHRIST. Rom. i. 4. Acts ii. 32, 33, 36. Matt. xxviii. 18.

This was what the Apostles constantly and uniformly insisted upon, in their preaching and ministry ; and what they always required their hearers to believe at their utmost peril. And this was what the first Christians did believe—This and no other was their *faith*—so the Apostles *preached*, and so the primitive converts *believed*. 1 Cor. xv. 11.

FAITH, then, *evangelical faith*, my Brethren, is the *credence* or *belief*, of the report or testimony of the Apostles concerning their master JESUS—that he is verily risen from the dead, and is, therefore assuredly THE CHRIST. This is saving and regenerating faith ; and therefore the Scripture assures us, that “ whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God.” 1 John v. 1.

This faith is wrought in the mind by the power of the Holy Spirit, accompanying the Apostolical report ; or, in other words, it is “ of the operation of God,” through the peculiar energy of that divine and demonstrative evidence which attends the publication of the Gospel, and which is mighty to the pulling down

of strong holds, removing of prejudice, and disposing the mind for the belief and obedience of the truth.

By this faith, the mind is endued with saving knowledge, with the wisdom that is from above: The believer is furnished from Heaven with new, holy, and active principles; by whose powerful and divine efficacy he becomes a new creature—the law of God is put into his mind, and written upon his heart; or as the Apostle John expresses it, he hath *the witness* (that is, the divine testimony, or gospel) *in himself*; and that same witness, or gospel, within him, becomes the power of God unto his salvation.

Accordingly, there is ascribed to this same faith, a quickening, regenerating, and saving power.—*Of his own will begat he us, with the word of truth—Born again by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever—Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God—Whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world—And this is the victory that overcometh the world even our faith—Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?* Jam. i. 18.—1 Pet. i. 23.—1 John v. 1, 4, 5.

But it ought never to be forgotten, that we must believe this report, or testimony of the Apostles, in their proper sense and meaning, or else it cannot be said, with propriety and truth, that we believe it at all. And their meaning is, that Jesus is the *Prophet, Priest, and King*, of the Church of God: for in these several characters the Son of God is exhibited in the Gospel; and so much the name of *Christ*, or *Messiah*, or *Anointed*, imports. (Acts iii. 22.—Heb. v. 6. and i. 6.)—And *anointing* was, of old, by divine appointment, the ceremony of separation or consecration, equally to each of those three offices.

Now to believe him to be the *Prophet*, is the same thing as to believe, that all divine knowledge appertaining to our true welfare and salvation, is contained in his revealed word: so that we are to hear him in all things whatsoever he says to us.—And to believe him to be the *Priest*, is the same as to believe that he

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is the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world; who suffered the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God; and who is entered into the heavenly sanctuary, now to appear in the presence of God for us.—And to believe that he is the *King*, to whom all authority is given in Heaven and on Earth, is the same thing as to believe, that he is mighty to save, and that we are bound to obey him in all things he has commanded.

But if, in the *first* place, we hearken rather to what man teaches, than to what *Jesus* speaks in his Word, we, in that case, reject him as the *Prophet*.—Or if, *secondly*, we hold that either our own works, tempers, frames, or feelings, or any one thing short of his blood and sacrifice, can be the *cause*, or *ground* of our salvation, we, in that case also deny him as the *Priest*.—Or if, *thirdly*, we are diffident of his power to save, or are not disposed to confess him before men, and observe all things whatsoever he has enjoined upon his disciples, we thereby, of course, deny that all authority in Heaven and on Earth, is given to him; and, in effect, say, we will not have this man to reign over us; or, in other words, we disown him as the *King*.

The Apostolic testimony concerning *Jesus*, not only affirms, that he is the *Christ*, but likewise that he is *the Son of God*; by which appellation we are generally to understand, that he is *Lord of all*, or *beir of all things*, and has a *name* that is *above every name*; or, in other words, that *all power* is given unto him, in Heaven and in Earth.—“He shall be great (said the Angel) and shall be called *the Son of the Highest*; and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there shall be no end.”

This character of his, the Son of the Highest, or *Son of God*, is in Scripture, grounded—upon his miraculous conception, or incarnation—upon his resurrection from the dead—and upon his exaltation on the Father’s right hand. In respect to the *former*, the Angel said to Mary, “The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee,

thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee : *therefore* also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the *Son of God*.”—And in respect to his *resurrection*, Paul says, that he was *declared to be the Son of God* with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, *by the resurrection from the dead*. And also, that God fulfilled the promise he had made to the fathers, in that he had raised up Jesus again ; as it is also written in the second Psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee. And that the appellation of *Son of God*, in this view of the subject, refers to our Lord’s supremacy, or universal dominion, appears by what the same Apostle says in another place ; “ for this end Christ both died, and rose and revived, that he might be LORD *both of the dead and living*.—And as to our Lord’s *exaltation*, it is recorded, “ that he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high ; being made so much better than the Angels, as he hath *by inheritance obtained a more excellent name* than they ; for unto which of the Angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.”—Luke i. 35.—Rom. i. 4.—Acts xiii. 32, 33.—Rom. xiv. 9.—Heb. i. 3, 4, 5.

To believe in the heart, and to confess with the mouth, the above doctrines is, in the expressive language of Scripture, what constitutes a real Christian—In other words, CHRISTIANITY—personal and genuine Christianity, appears to be, in fact, nothing else but an *acknowledgment* in thought, word, and deed, *that Jesus is THE CHRIST*, or, *that Jesus Christ is THE SON OF GOD*.—It is from hence that converted Sinners derive that peculiar happiness, that exclusive, transcendent privilege, which the Scripture calls, *the peace of God which passeth all understanding*. The more perfect such an *acknowledgment* is, the higher their happiness rises ; but every deviation from it mars their enjoyment, and leads them into the land of darkness, and of the shadow of death.*—“ Let him that think-

* See a very small anonymous tract, entitled, *The Old Path*, written several years ago, and said to be the production of a Minister of the Church of England.

eth he standeth take heed lest he fall---Let us therefore fear lest a promise being left us of entering into his rest any of you should seem to come short of it---Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief---If any man draw back, my Soul shall have no pleasure in him---He that endureth to the end shall be saved." 1 Cor. x. 12.---Heb. iv. 1, 11, and x. 38.---Matt. x. 22.

The Apostle alledges, as has been already observed, that our Lord was declared to be the Son of God with power, by his *resurrection* from the dead. In reference to which event, the Father said, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee; and, Let all the Angels of God worship him: And in reference to which, he himself also said, after he had risen, All power is given me in Heaven and in Earth. Agreeably to which the Apostle likewise declared to the Jews, on the memorable day of Pentecost, "That God had assuredly made that same *Jesus* whom they had crucified both LORD and CHRIST."† Acts xiii. 33.---Heb. i. 5, 6, and v. 5.---Matt. xxviii. 18.---Acts ii. 36.

Here it is we are to look for the proper ground of the christian service, and hence springs the obligation to observe the rules and ordinances of the Gospel.---If *Jesus* be the Christ, the Son of God, and Lord of all; or, if God hath, indeed, made this same *Jesus* both Lord and Christ; his precepts and laws, most assuredly, demand our closest attention, our highest veneration, and our willing, unreserved, constant, and unabating obedience.---"All power is given to me, in Heaven and in Earth," said the risen Saviour to his disciples: and he adds, "Go ye THEREFORE and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching

† The great truth which formed the basis of the Gospel dispensation, in Peter's account, was, that God had made *Jesus* both LORD and CHRIST; or, in other words, that he was indeed *the Son of God*; of which he urges his *resurrection* and *exaltation* as the demonstrative proofs.—See verses 32 and 33.

ing them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you : And lo, I am with you alway even unto the end of the world. Amen." Matt. xxviii. 19, 20.

Yes, my brethren, we are here instructed and constrained, not only to observe the laws and ordinances of the Gospel, but also to observe them with the same *view*, or to the same *intent*, as well as in the same *manner*, as he has directed ; or, in other words, to regulate our observance of them wholly, and absolutely, by the pattern which he has exhibited in his Word : without which, indeed, it cannot justly, or in strict truth, be said, that we do at all observe them.---When *Nadab* and *Abihu* used *strange fire* in their Sacrifices, and when the Jews of latter times offered the *lame* and the *blind* for Sacrifice, the divine law, which contained no such permission, was to all intents and purposes violated, and the Deity himself insulted. The same may be said of every deviation from the laws and prescriptions of the New Testament : for the Lord Jehovah is still of one and the same mind, and requires from us as strict an adherence and conformity to his will, and as exact and entire a submission to his authority, as he did from the Old Testament worshippers.

It has been sometimes very gravely and confidently urged, that provided the main end of a christian institution be secured, we need not be very anxious or scrupulous, for an exact and punctilious adherence to all the circumstances of the primitive exemplar. But this is certainly a very false and pernicious maxim : since it allows men to dispense with, and disobey, in some cases, what the Deity has prescribed. And it is quite clear, that every circumstance expressed in a divine Law is as much a part of the divine will, and, therefore, as much binding upon us, as that which we may choose to call, its most important and essential part---nor can we dispense with it, without insulting, in that instance, the Majesty of the Supreme Lawgiver, and so incurring the guilt of disobedience and rebellion.

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In the construction of the ancient Tabernacle, the strict and indispensable rule was, To do all things according to the pattern exhibited in Mount Sinai. Not a single circumstance in that pattern was to be omitted. And can we suppose the service prescribed in the New Testament, or the pattern exhibited in Mount Zion, is to be imitated, or copied, with less care and exactness, than that exhibited in Mount Sinai? Reason itself, and the whole tenor of the New Testament language and example, forbid the supposition: And the argument of Paul, in correcting the abuses which had crept in among the Corinthians relating to the Lord's Supper, is here a case in point. His plan evidently was, to require of that people an immediate recurrence, or strict conformity to the original and divine Exemplar. Had there been abuses in his time, that related to Baptism, he would, doubtless, have endeavoured to correct them by a similar method, that is, by recommending a careful and strict adherence to the primitive law of the institution.

These, my brethren, are the grounds and reasons of our opposition to Infant Sprinkling. For we really cannot help thinking *that* practice, an absolute violation of the Christian law of Baptism---as to its *design*, and the *manner* of administering it---as to the *rite* itself, and its proper *subjects*. It being our firm and decided opinion, that the practice of Infant Sprinkling changes the divine Ordinance of Baptism to quite another thing, and so supercedes it, or makes it void, as effectually as ever the old Jews made void the Commandments of God by their own vile traditions.

In order to exhibit more particularly and fully our sentiments on this subject, together with the principal reasons on which those sentiments are founded, I shall now proceed to inquire and describe to the best of my ability,

I. What is *Baptism*; or, to what particular *rite* the Evangelical Commission to baptize refers.

II. Who are its scriptural *Subjects*; or, to what particular description of people, this ordinance is destined in the New Testament.

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III.

III. What is the *import* and *design* of the institution ; or, What that doctrine really is, which it is intended to hold forth.

FIRST, then, as to *the rite itself*, or that evangelical usage called *baptism*, it appears to us to be no other than *immersion* in water, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. And we cannot help thinking, that the following considerations will fully justify and establish this opinion.

1. The *places* chosen at first for the administration of this ordinance, were *Jordan*, the largest river in the whole Country, and *Enon*, near Salim, because there was *much water* there. From whence it is quite natural and safe to conclude, that immersion, and not aspersion, was the practice of the primitive baptizers. For had it been the latter, there could have been no need to choose a *large river* for the performance of such a ceremony, or to resort with that view to places where there was *much water* ; as the contents of a small number of such vessels as those that were used at the marriage in *Cana* of Galilee, would at any time have been quite sufficient to answer the purpose. ENON was a place of *much water*, in the same sense as JORDAN was so ; for the same kind of expression in the Greek language is applied to large collections of water, and in the *Septuagint version* of Jer. li. 13 to the river *Euphrates*. And since the circumstance of *much water* is mentioned as the reason for choosing *Enon*, or what made it a fit and convenient place for the administration of baptism, we may very safely conclude that the rite was no other than *immersion*.

2. We read of *Philip and the Eunuch*, (Acts viii. 38.) that they went both down *into the water*, and that Philip *there* baptized the Eunuch, and that they came up *out of the water*. This entirely coincides with our opinion, that the rite which Philip then performed was *immersion* ; but it will by no means accord with the idea of *sprinkling*. We cannot conceive it possible for the Evangelist, or even for any man of common sense, to use the above language with a view to convey the idea of the rite of *Sprinkling*. For, in order to per-

form that rite, there could be no manner of necessity for Philip and the Eunuch to go *into the water*, or to wet so much as the soles of their feet on the occasion. It is in vain to plead here, that *to or towards* the water, is intended, where it is said, that they went *into* the water, or that such is the meaning of the Greek preposition in that place; since the Evangelist had taken care to inform us before (verse 36,) that they were already come *to* the water—a certain proof that *that* could not be the meaning in verse 38. It is very certain, that the account of the baptism of the Eunuch clearly represents *immersion*. The celebrated reformer *Calvin*, strongly prejudiced as he was against our sentiments, could not help acknowledging this, in his commentary on the passage in question—"We see here (says he) how baptism was administered among the ancients; for they *immersed the whole body* in water."

3. We are plainly taught in the scripture, that there is in baptism the representation of a *burial* and a *resurrection*; and even of the Christian's conformity to his Lord, and union with him in his death, burial and resurrection. (Rom. vi. 3, 4.—Col. ii. 12.—1 Pet. iii. 21.) *Immersion* naturally and obviously agrees with this; but as for *sprinkling*, it does not appear to have the least shadow of an agreement with it. It is therefore impossible for us to believe *that* rite to be *sprinkling*, in which the Christian is said to be *buried* and *risen again* with his Lord; or which represents our salvation through the *resurrection* of Jesus Christ from the dead. On the contrary, it seems to us quite natural and reasonable, and indeed, common sense constrains us to believe, that such a rite can be no other than *immersion*.—In short, we are firmly of opinion, with the very respectable bishop *Hoadly*, that if *sprinkling* had been, indeed, the apostolic practice, we should never have found in the New Testament such forms of expression as *dying*, and being *buried*, and *rising again* in this rite.

4. Our blessed Lord calls his own *sufferings*, a *baptism*, (Luke xii. 50) agreeably, no doubt, to the ancient language of inspiration—"All thy waves, and

thy billows are gone over me—I sink in deep mire, where there is no standing—Deliver me out of the mire, and let me not sink—Let me be delivered from them that hate me, and out of the deep waters—Let not the water-flood overflow me, neither let the deep swallow me up.” Psalm xlii. 7. lxi. 2, 14, and 15. Who in his senses can conceive, that it was in allusion to the sprinkling of a few drops of water on the face, the sufferings of Christ were denominated *a baptism*? Or what comparison could there possibly be between that rite and the tremendous and overwhelming sufferings of our blessed Lord? Surely not the least in the world, any more than there is between light and darkness. But the resemblance or comparison between those sufferings and immersion, is quite natural and obvious; of which the above-cited passages are a very sufficient proof. We may, therefore, venture to assert, that it was the rite of immersion our Lord had in view, when he called his sufferings, a baptism: And, consequently, that it could be no other than the same rite of *immersion* which the evangelical commission to baptize refers to.

5. The state or situation of the Israelites at the bottom of the Red Sea, encompassed with the waters, and covered with the cloud, is likewise denominated *a baptism*, by the Apostle Paul. (1 Cor. x. 2.) Nor is it at all strange, that he who calls baptism *a burial*, should also call the burial of the Israelites in the cloud and in the sea, *a baptism*. His language, doubtless, in the latter case, is as proper and expressive as in the former; and in both cases perfectly so. From hence it is to us quite evident, that the rite which Paul considered as held forth in the evangelical law of Baptism, could be nothing short of *immersion*. It is, surely, a most pitiful and wretched subterfuge, here to urge, that the Israelites were *sprinkled*, or that it was with a view to sprinkling, the Apostle made the above application of the word *baptism*: since there is not the least intimation in scripture, that the children of Israel underwent such an operation in passing through the sea, or that so much

as

as one drop of water fell upon them in the mean time, either from the *bright* cloud that covered them, or from the waters which stood upright as an heap. Indeed, the force or operation of the wind, which had divided the sea, and kept it up as mighty walls on each side of them, must necessarily and effectually have prevented the least drop of water coming from thence upon them. Nay, some have concluded, that such were the miraculous effects of the wind at that time, that not only the bottom was dried up and hardened, but also that even the waters themselves, which stood up as an heap, or as a wall on the peoples right hand and on their left, were thereby actually *frozen* up. And I think, it must be owned, that such an opinion derives no small degree of countenance from its being said, that the Israelites went into the midst of the sea upon *dry ground*, and that the depths were *congealed* in the heart of the sea. (Ex. xiv. 22. xv. 8.)—And as to the cloud, or *fiery* pillar, (for such it seems to have been during the passage) it is equally improbable surely, that any water should drop upon them from thence. If therefore, the Israelites were *not sprinkled* in the cloud and in the sea, but as it were *immersed*, or *buried* in the deep, it will very naturally follow, that the rite alluded to by the Apostle in the above cited passage, and which is intended in the evangelical commission to baptize, is not sprinkling but *immersion*.

6. What occurred on the day of *Pentecost*, whilst the Apostles were sitting together in the house, is likewise denominated a *baptism*. When the Holy Spirit came on that day, with a sound from Heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, *filling the house where the Apostles were sitting*, our Lord's words were fulfilled, "Ye shall be baptized with (or *in*) the Holy Ghost not many days hence." And inasmuch as there appeared then, divided flames, or *cloven tongues like as of fire*, we may, as I apprehend, consider this same occurrence as fulfilling, as well as explaining, that remarkable prediction of John the Baptist respecting our Lord, "He shall baptize you with (or *in*) the Holy Ghost, and fire."

fire."—*It filled all the house (or room) where they were sitting*, says the Evangelist. "This (as Archbishop Tillotson has somewhere observed) is what our Saviour calls Baptizing the Apostles with the Holy Ghost: So that they who sat in the house were, as it were immersed in the Holy Ghost, as they who were baptized with water, were overwhelmed and covered all over with water, which is the proper notion of baptism." It appears then, very evidently, that the same occurrence is called a *baptism*, in allusion to the rite of *immersion*. It is in vain to argue here in favour of the practice of *pouring*, from the Spirit's gifts being said to have been *poured* on the Apostles; for there are other words as well as *pouring* applied to the communication of those gifts. We read, before our Lord's ascension, that the Holy Spirit should be *sent*, and should be *given*, and that he should *come* to the disciples. (John xiv. 16, 26. and xv. 26.) And after our Lord's ascension, we also read, that they *received* the Holy Ghost, that he *fell*, and was *shed* and *poured* upon them, and that they were all *filled* therewith (Acts ii. 4, 33. and x. 44, 45, 47.) But neither *filling*, nor *shedding* nor *pouring*, nor *falling*, nor *receiving*, nor any one else of the above words, will explain the meaning of the word *baptism*, or ascertain that particular usage which that word is intended to express; nay, or even shew, that there is any kind of resemblance or comparison between the extraordinary communication of the Spirit and that ordinance. The resemblance or comparison between the baptism of the Spirit and Water baptism, as was observed before, is to be seen in the state or situation of the Apostles, when the sound from Heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, came and *filled all the house* [or room] *where they were sitting*: So that they were in the mean time, in a manner, *immersed* or *overwhelmed*. The spiritual blessings, or, those divine gifts which our exalted Saviour bestows upon men, are in that circumstance represented like a mighty torrent, or vast swelling stream, overflowing every thing in its way; and in which his disciples are *immersed* and *washed*,
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ed, and so fitted for his service.—Of the same sort, in all probability, was that occurrence also, which is recorded in Acts iv. 31. And it is pretty evident from the words used in chap. xi. 15. that what happened in the house of Cornelius too, was of the same description.—“The Holy Ghost fell on them (says Peter) *as on us at the beginning.*”

7. It appears that *baptism* is in scripture accounted a *washing*—“arise and *be baptized* (said Ananias to Saul) and *wash away thy sins.*” Mention is also made of the *washing of regeneration*, and the *washing of water*, in reference, it should seem, to the same ordinance. (Acts xxii. 16. Tit. iii. 5. Eph. v. 26.)—Now, if the scriptures do, indeed, reckon baptism a *washing*, it will amount to a very good proof, that that ordinance can be nothing short of *immersion*. For the scriptural rites instituted for the purpose of *washing*, appear to have been, all of them, of that description. As to the ceremony of *sprinkling*, it does not seem to be any where in Holy Writ reckoned among the *washings*; but appears, on the contrary to have been a thing totally distinct from every kind of lotion. (See Numb. xix. 19.) Some, indeed, have pleaded, that *sprinkling* is classed among the *washings*, in Heb. ix. 13. where we read of the *sprinkling of blood and ashes*. But the bare naming of this, will, surely, be sufficient to confute so strange a conceit: since even common sense alone will evince, that no one thing can possibly be washed by being sprinkled with blood and ashes. It is also quite clear that the inspired writer never once thought of any such matter; for when he makes mention of the application of the blood and ashes, he uses a very different word from that which he had used (verse 10) when speaking of the Jewish washings. It is also well known, that, even in common speech, *sprinkling* and *washing* are very far from being synonymous terms: Every housewife and maid servant knows well enough, that the *washing* of clothes and linen, is a very different thing from *sprinkling* them; and all our shepherds can inform us, that they mean a quite different operation from

from *sprinkling*, when they talk of *washing their sheep*. It appears then, that both the Bible, and the common sense of mankind distinguish between those two actions, and consider them as very different the one from the other. If baptism be, indeed, in the Bible accounted *a washing*, we may venture to affirm that it cannot be administered by sprinkling or aspersions, since that is never, in that sacred Book, considered as *a washing*. Besides, when the scripture represents baptism as a *washing*, it is clear, that we are to understand by it a *total*, and not a *partial* washing; or the washing of the *whole body*, and not that of a particular part: such as the *head* only, or the *face*. When our Lord enjoined a *partial washing* (John xiii.) as a rite which he would have his disciples observe in imitation of his example, he expressly mentions the particular part, on which it was to be performed. Had he, therefore, meant the *face* only, or the *head*, as the part that was to be *baptized*, he would, doubtless, have said so, as plainly as he had done in the other case. But since our Lord never gave us the smallest intimation, that baptism appertains to any one part of the body more than another; and as nothing at all of that kind appears in the scriptural account of its administration, the conclusion is obvious, direct, and unavoidable, That when the ordinance is represented as a *washing*, nothing less than a *total washing*, or the washing of the *whole body* can be intended. As it is very evident then, that the whole body is to be baptized, it is also equally so, that the rite is to be performed *at once*: the whole tenor of the inspired history of its administration plainly indicates as much. Since, therefore, the whole body is to be washed, and that *at once*, or by one single operation, in the administration of this christian rite, it must inevitably follow, that the rite itself can be no other than a *total immersion*; seeing it is absolutely impossible to wash the whole body, at once, in any other way.

8. That remarkable appellation, which our blessed Lord has given to this ordinance, in John iii. 5, namely,

ly, *a being born of water*, seems very naturally and obviously to allude to *immersion*, or rather to *emersion*; which, in the scriptural view of baptism, formed a part of its administration, and was what must have given rise to the above form of expression: being, indeed, a very striking figure of the new and spiritual *birth*. For, as Baptism is the first step in the evangelical service, it is a sign of the commencement of the christian, or divine life; or the *putting on of Christ*: And as the baptized are in that ordinance *taken out of the water*, they are therein very naturally represented as *born again*; or, in the language of the above passage, *born of water*. So that the ordinance, in this view of it, holds forth the doctrine of the new manhood, or new creation; or, in other words, the doctrine of regeneration, or the new birth; and answers to what the Apostle Paul calls, *a resurrection to newness of life*. It is impossible for us to suppose that sprinkling was the apostolical or primitive practice; seeing there can be nothing in that rite, which in the least resembles either a *birth* or a resurrection.—That our Lord, in the above passage, must have alluded to baptism, will appear from the very scope of his words, as well as from the obvious similitude there is between that passage and several others where that ordinance is clearly connected with *salvation* and the *remission of sins*: Such as Mark xvi. 16. 1 Pet. iii. 21. Acts ii. 38, and xxii. 16.—Inasmuch then, as the New Testament represents the Christian, in his baptism, as *one born of water*, we may very safely conclude, that the New Testament ordinance of Baptism, is in truth, not any thing short of *immersion*.

9. That Baptism is *immersion*, will further appear from the native and express signification of the greek word *Baptizo*. That word signifies *to dip*, or *immerse*, as naturally and fully as the Latin words *mergo* and *immergo*, or the Welsh words *suddo* and *joddi*. If this Greek verb be sometimes used in a foreign or figurative sense, the very same may be said of other words of like import, in all languages: *to dip* and *to immerse*, not excepted.

cepted. How often has it been said of the man of care, that he is *immersed* in business? And of one who has been out in a heavy shower of rain, that he has been *nicely dipt*, absolutely *drowned*, thoroughly *drenched*, finely *ducked*, terribly *doused*, and the like? Yet from such use of those words no reasonable man would ever think of attempting to fix their native, or plain and proper meaning; as they are there evidently employed in an unnatural and tropical, or, in other words, a strongly figurative sense.—But it is not in such a sense, but the very reverse; that is, in its natural, obvious, and direct signification, that the word *Baptizo* is constantly and invariably applied to the ordinance in question, in the New Testament: And, therefore, it is, surely, but the most perverse and wretched kind of quibbling, to pretend to object here, from any circumstance or consideration that may arise from, or appertain to the unnatural, tropical, or figurative use of this word.

That to *dip*, or *immerse*, is the primary and legitimate meaning of the word *Baptizo*, may be proved,

(1.) From the testimony of the most celebrated *commentators* and *critics*.—LUTHER affirms, that the Greek word for *Baptism* may be rendered *immersion*, or laying a thing in water, so as entirely to cover it with water. And he gives it as his opinion, that the subjects of the ordinance ought to be *wholly dipt*: “for the Etymology of the word (says he) seems to require that.”—(*In his Latin works printed at Wittenburgh, Tom. 1. fol. 71.*) He also says, (*Tom. 2. fol. 79.*) That to *baptize*, in Greek, is to *dip*, and that *baptism* is *dipping*.—“That the Minister dippeth a child into the water [he observes] signifieth *death*; that he again bringeth him out of it, signifieth *life*,” which he grounds upon Rom. vi.—And, a little further, he adds, “Being moved by this reason, I would have those that are to be baptized to be *entirely immersed*, as the word imports, and the Mystery signifies.”—See his words quoted more at large by Dr. DU VEIL on *Acts viii. 38.*

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“ The word *Baptize* [says CALVIN] signifies, *to immerse*; and it is certain, that the primitive church observed the rite of *immersion*. (Inst. B. 4. C. 15. § 19.)

“ Christ commanded us (says BEZA) to be *baptized*; by which word, *immersion* is certainly signified.” (Quoted by Booth, Pæd. Ex.)

“ This was the rite of baptizing (says Casaubon) that persons were *plunged* into the water; which even the very word *baptizein*, to baptize, sufficiently declares.” (In Matt. iii. 6.)

“ We are commanded by Christ (says HOSPINIAN) to be *baptized*, which word certainly signifies *immersion*.” (Hist. Sacram. L. 2. C. 1. p. 30. quoted by Booth as before.)

“ Baptism (says ZANCHIUS) signifies two things; first, and properly, *immersion* in water: for the proper signification of *Baptizo*, is *to immerse*, *to plunge under*, *to overwhelm in water*.” (Opera Tom. vi. p. 217.)

That Baptism used to be performed by *immersion*, and *not by pouring*, (says GROTIUS) appears both from the *proper signification* of the word, and *the places* chosen for the administration of the rite. John iii. 23. Acts viii. 38. And also from the many allusions of the Apostles which *cannot* be referred to sprinkling. Rom. vi. 3, 4. Col. ii. 12.” (Quoted in Poole's Synopsis, Matt. iii. 6.)

“ In England of late years,” (says SELDEN, referring to the then recent change from immersion to sprinkling) “ I ever thought the Parson baptized *his own fingers* rather than the child. (Table Talk. p. 4.)

“ The custom of the ancient churches (says bishop TAYLOR) was *not sprinkling* but *immersion*; in pursuance of the sense of the word [*baptize*,] in the commandment and example of our blessed Saviour.” (Ductor Dub. p. 664.)

The word *baptize* in its literal sense undeniably signifies being *dipped in*, or *washed with water*, says bishop CLAYTON. (Letters bet. bp. of Corke and W. PENN, p. 79.)

The late Mr. WESLEY allows that the primitive Christians were baptized by *immersion*, and that Rom. vi. 4. alludes to that ancient manner of baptizing. (See his note on that passage.)

The learned and celebrated Mythologist Mr. JACOB BRYANT, speaking of the primitive Christians, that they had no ceremonies of which they could be justly accused, adds, “ they were *baptized*, or in other words, *dipped in water*. (Bryant on the authenticity of the Scripture, p. 170.)

Mr. W. FRENCH a learned member now of the University of Cambridge, after having observed that most christians sprinkle a little water on a child’s face, and call it baptism, adds, “ I have no objection to the use of the term, but I contend that the words BAPTISMA, BAPTIZO, BAPTO, mean a very different rite.” (*Thoughts on Subscription* by W. FRENCH, M. A. Fellow of Jesus Col. Camb.)

(2.) That the Greek word in question, properly signifies *to immerse*, the voice of our most approved LEXICOGRAPHERS will further evince.—BAPTIZO, *to plunge, to wash*, says SCHREVELIUS. (Edit. Amst. 1685.)—BAPTIZO, *to immerse, to dip*, says TROMMIUS. (Concordant. Græcæ.)—BAPTIZO, *to dip, or immerse*, says SCAPULA. (Lond. 1652.)—BAPTIZO, *to plunge, to immerse, to overwhelm* in water, says HEDERICUS. (Edit. 1727.)—BAPTIZO; the native and proper signification of it is, *to dip* into water, or *to plunge* under water, says LEIGH. (*Crit. Sacr.* Edit. 1650.)—BAPTIZEIN, signifies only *to immerse*; not to *wash*, except by consequence, says ALSTEDUIS. (*Lexicon Theologicum*.)—To BAPTIZE, *to dip* into water, or *to plunge* one into the water, says WILSON. (*Christ. Dictionary* Edit. 1661.)

(3.) The conduct of the German Translators of the Bible, may be urged as another proof of this same argument.—“ The Germans (says LUTHER) call *Baptism*, TAUFF, from *depth*, which in their language they call *Tieff*; as if it were proper those should be *deeply immersed*, who are baptized. And, truly, if you con-

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sider what baptism signifies, you shall see the same thing required : for it signifies, that our nativity, that is full of sins, which is entirely of flesh and blood, may be *overwhelmed* by divine grace : therefore the manner of baptism ought to answer to the signification of baptism, that it might shew a sure and plain sign of it." (LUTHER on *Babylon's Captivity*, quoted by DU VEIL as before.)

(4.) We have here also, most clearly and decidedly on our side, the voice of the *translators* of the Scriptures into the *Dutch* language.—Those learned men have rendered the word *Baptizo*, and the other Greek words which relate to this Ordinance, into such plain and expressive Dutch words as *Doopen*, *Doop*, *Dooper*, &c. which correspond with the English words, *to dip*, *dipping*, *dipper*, and the like.—These men were unquestionably well versed in the knowledge of the Greek language ; and therefore, it must be altogether unlikely, if not quite impossible, that they should mistake the meaning of those words. It is also well known, that they themselves practised *sprinkling* ; and likewise, that *sprinkling* was the common practice in their country, and what the government there, as well as in the neighbouring nations, favoured and adopted : and consequently, they could have had no worldly *interest*, in making their translation *favourable to immersion*. Forasmuch, therefore, as their translation of those parts of the Scripture which appertain to baptism, is contrary to their own practice, and to the prevailing custom of their country, as well as to what was favoured and adopted by the government under which they lived, we may venture to conclude, that it could be nothing else but the testimony and authority of their own consciences, that induced them to offer to their country such a translation. May it not also, of course, be very safely concluded, that *to dip*, or *to immerse* must be the natural and proper signification of the word *Baptizo* ? (See the DUTCH TESTAMENT, with SEWELL'S *Dutch-Engl. Dict.* under the above words.)

(5.) Another

(5.) Another proof, that *to immerse* must be the plain and legitimate meaning of the Greek word *Baptizo*, is the obvious and unquestionable signification of the words *Bedfuddi*, and *Bedfuddo*, which appear to correspond with it in the *ancient British* language, and from which the modern *Welsh* word, *bedyddio* (*to baptize*) is evidently derived. Now the plain, and literal meaning of the above words, *bedfuddi*, and *bedfuddo*, is *to immerse*; which is a very material circumstance in this argument. The word for *baptism*, in the *modern Welsh*, is *BEDYDD*: the *etymology* of which is not at this time generally known. Neither is it to be found in any one *Dictionary* of that language. Not one of the compilers of those books appears to have been acquainted with the *etymology* of that word: nor do I believe that there is any other way to make it out, but by recurring to the other dialects of the *ancient British*; the *Cornish* and the *Armorican*. By such a recurrence, and a careful comparison of the several words for baptism, in all the three dialects, we may, I doubt not, come fairly, and safely, at the root and express signification of the above *Welsh* word. Upon this ground then, I will venture to assert, that the word in question is derived from *SUDDIANT*, a *British* word, which is well known to mean *dipping*, or *immersion*; and the verb of which is *foddi*, *suddi*, or *suddo*.—*BEDZHIDHIAN* (*Bedfuddian*) is the word for *Baptism* in the *Cornu-british* dialect; the affinity of which, with the *Welsh* word *suddiant*, must be very obvious. This *Cornu-british* word, *Bedfuddian*, points out the origin of the *Armorican* word for Baptism, *BADIDHIAN*, (*Baduddiant*) which is doubtless, no other than *Badfuddiant*, a little matter contracted; and whose correspondence, or synonymy with the *Welsh* word *Suddiant*, is still equally clear and certain, with that of the aforementioned *Cornu-british* word. By a comparison of these *Armorican* and *Cornu-british* words, we are led unavoidably to conclude, that *Bedfuddiant*, or *Badfuddiant*, must have been the original word for Baptism in the *British* language; and that, from which the present *Welsh* word *Bedydd* sprung.—In time, this same
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ancient British word (*Bedfuddiant*, or *Badfuddiant*) like many other words in all languages, underwent a considerable change, by abridgment or contraction. The Cornish Britons omitted the letter T; the Armoricans, the letter S; and the Cambro-Britons, the letters S, I, A, N, T.—In this very way, the Welsh word *Bedydd*, or *Badudd* (for it has been spelt both ways) appears to have been formed. It was originally *Bedfuddiant*, or *Badfuddiant*: And whatever may be said as to the precise meaning of the prefix, the word itself, most unquestionably, signified *immersion*; for the meaning of the word *fuddiant* has always amounted to that, as fully and expressly as any one word in any language could possibly do.—Having thus proved, that the ancient British word for *baptism*, meant *immersion*, it is very natural to enquire, in the next place, Who taught our ancestors to express this ordinance by a word of that import?—If Christianity, as is generally allowed, and that, I believe, on very good grounds, was received in this Island at a very early period; either from the Apostles themselves, or some of their fellow-labourers; it will follow, that they were the very men who directed the ancient Britons to use such a word for Baptism: And, of course, that those inspired persons themselves were *all Dippers*, and understood by the Greek word *Baptizo*, nothing less than TO DIP, BATHE, or IMMERSE. And if they understood it so, we may, doubtless, very safely believe, that such was then, indeed, and that such is still, its natural, proper, and direct meaning.

(6.) A further proof in favour of immersion may be drawn from the plain and acknowledged signification of the Hebrew word TABAL, to which the Greek word *Baptizo* answers in the *Septuagint* version. The word is also used for the action of baptizing in Hebrew writings of a date subsequent to the Christian æra. If this word has been sometimes used in a foreign or figurative sense, the same has also been the case with other words of the same meaning, and even with the Greek word *Bapto*, in the *Septuagint* of Dan. v. 21. but that will

will not prove that *to immerse* is not their primary or native signification. The Hebrew Lexicons, it is well known, give, *to immerse*, as the proper legitimate sense of the word *Tabal*; which its general use in the Hebrew scriptures seems also sufficiently to corroborate: And inasmuch as it is used in ancient Jewish writings to denote the action of baptizing, we may venture to conclude, that that same action was anciently nothing else but immersion, as well as that immersion was also, in the mean time, the current and established sense of the word *Baptizo*. (See GILL on Matt. iii. and GROTIUS on chap. xiv. 2.)

(7.) An additional argument to prove that the natural, unequivocal, and primary meaning of the word *Baptizo*, is *to dip*, or *immerse*, may be grounded on the common and established practice of the *Greek Church*, from age to age, down to the present time. Who can be so likely to know the signification of Greek words as the Greeks themselves? And who so likely to understand the plain, undisguised meaning of the word *Baptizo* as the *Greek Christians*, to whose mother tongue, or native language, that same word belongs?—That it does *not*, in their opinion signify *sprinkling*, is certain: for they have never adopted that practice. On the other hand, that they understand it to signify *immersion*, is equally certain: for such has been, indeed, their established practice from generation to generation. This then, is a cogent, decisive proof—a clear, conclusive evidence, that the christian ordinance of Baptism can be nothing short of immersion. It is, surely, a very singular circumstance, that the *Greek Church* should, from age to age, adhere to the rite of immersion, without ever once attempting to disown that usage, widely as that same church has departed from primitive christianity in a multitude of other matters. How else can this possibly be accounted for, but by supposing that *Baptizo* was so clearly and universally understood among the Greeks to signify *immersion*, that that usage could not there be laid aside for shame, or without offering violence to the common sense of the people?

people? If the *Greeks* then, who must have been the best judges in the world, considered *immersion* as the proper and legitimate sense of the word *Baptizo*, the proof must be conclusive, and the advocates for *sprinkling* ought to give up the point, and quit the field for ever.

Now, seeing that *to dip*, or *immerse*, is the primary, legitimate, and unequivocal signification of the word *Baptizo*, as has been sufficiently proved in the foregoing pages, it must necessarily follow, that the administration of Baptism ought to coincide with that, and that every deviation from the same is absolutely indefensible and criminal. The awful punishments of *Nadab* and *Abihu*, *Uzzah* and others, are left upon record as standing memorials, or plain and perpetual indications of the mind of God in matters of this kind; and ought to teach us to be very cautious how we meddle with divine institutions. Whenever we presume to depart from the sacred pattern in any one case, we ought to consider that we are also departing, at the same time, from the fair and flowery path of innocence and safety.

Pædobaptists in pleading that *baptizo* naturally signifies, *to pour*, or *sprinkle*, as well as *to immerse*, argue in a most stupid and absurd manner; and remind us of the man in the fable, that blew both hot and cold out of the same mouth. To assert that such very different ideas may be comprehended in the natural or primary signification of that word, is like asserting, that both *high* and *low*, or *small* and *great*, or even *light* and *darkness*, may be comprised in the natural or primary signification of one and the same word; than which nothing more stupid, absurd, or false, can well be imagined. No word, surely, can have more than one natural, leading, or primary sense: and yet that must be the case with the word *Baptizo*, if *to pour*, *sprinkle*, and *immerse*, constitute its natural, leading, or primary signification, as some people seem to suppose. — *Immersion*, *sprinkling*, and *pouring*, are considered both by God and man, as three distinct rites or actions.

That God so distinguishes them, may be proved from Lev. iv. 6, 7. "The priest shall *dip* his finger in the blood, and *sprinkle* of the blood seven times before the Lord, and before the veil of the sanctuary—and shall *pour* all the blood of the bullock at the bottom of the altar of the burnt offering." Now had the priest presumed to convert *dipping* here into *sprinkling* or *pouring*, and so *sprinkle* or *pour* upon, instead of *dipping* his finger, he would have perverted the whole of that typical institution, and become guilty, to all intents and purposes, of an absolute violation of the divine precept: yet it does not appear that his conduct, in such a case, would have been at all more improper, absurd, or presumptuous, than that of our modern Pædobaptists with respect to the New Testament law of baptism.

I will beg leave to finish my observations on this head in the words of the celebrated *Gilbert Wakefield*, A. B. late fellow of Jesus College in Cambridge; one of the first scholars, and greatest masters of the Greek language now living.

"The Greek word BAPTIZO (says Mr. *Wakefield*) which occurs not unfrequently in classic authors, universally signifies, as far as my observation has extended, *to dip entirely under water*. Nor is there any proof, or presumption to the contrary in any part of the New Testament.

"John the Baptist is represented by the Evangelists MATTHEW and MARK, as *baptizing* in the RIVER *Jordan*. This seems to intimate that *he* did something more than *sprinkle* his converts."

And JESUS, after being *baptized* by JOHN, is said to COME UP *out of the water*; which must be interpreted as an additional plea in support of my proposition.

In one part of the Gospels, JOHN is said to have *baptized at Ænon near Salem*, BECAUSE *there were MANY WATERS*, or much water, *there*.

"In the *Acts* of the *Apostles*, PHILIP the *Deacon*, in some conversation with the Nobleman of *Æthiopia* took occasion to shew, that JESUS of *Nazareth* corresponded to the character predicted of the MESSIAH by *Isaiah*
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the prophet: And as they were prosecuting their journey, the Eunuch addressed him and said; *See, here is water, what doth hinder me to be baptized?* And Philip said, *If thou believest with all thy heart, thou mayest.* And he answered, and said; *I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.* And he commanded the chariot to stand still; and THEY WENT DOWN BOTH INTO THE WATER, both Philip and the Eunuch; and he baptized him.

“These portions of scripture speak very clearly for themselves, and require no comment or explanation. They afford obvious and unquestionable proofs, that baptism was performed by immersion, and not by sprinkling.”

He then quotes Rom. vi. 3, 4. and adds,—“Here PAUL by a bold figurative comparison, represents Christian baptism as an emblem of the DEATH and RESURRECTION of our LORD. But there evidently is no propriety in this representation unless the ceremony of baptism was performed by the immersion of the person baptized. In that case, indeed, we begin to discover some resemblance between the allusion and the fact. The body, when covered by water, might not unaptly be compared to the dead body of our SAVIOUR in its state of concealment beneath the Earth; and the raising of it up again out of that element, in which the human body has no power and activity, might as significantly represent the Resurrection of JESUS from the Grave.”

“Who does not see that the APOSTLE’S allusion is very inapposite and absurd, upon the supposition that baptism consisted in sprinkling a few drops of water on the face of an infant with the finger?”

He afterwards quotes 1 Cor. x. 1—3. and 1 Pet. iii. 20—22. and, after making several remarks to the same purpose as before, he thus concludes,

“The truth of my proposition [that baptism, as performed by John the baptist, and by the Apostles of Jesus Christ, was the immersion of the whole body under water] is I hope completely ascertained: And though none of the observations here advanced may convey any information to the learned reader, they will, I dare say,

be new to many, and may excite, probably, the attention of some, who have hitherto had neither leisure, nor inclination, nor courage, to examine the creed of their forefathers, or dispute the authority of their teachers; and may induce them to set about that necessary work, with a view to the regulation of their own faith and practice.”*

HAVING by this time, as I hope, sufficiently shewn, What is *Baptism*; or, to what particular rite or action the evangelical commission, to baptize, refers; and that it is in fact nothing short of *immersion*; I will now proceed to shew,

SECONDLY, “Who are its Scriptural *Subjects* ;” or, To what particular description of persons this ordinance was designed by our Lord Jesus Christ.—And here it may be safely affirmed,

1. That the ordinance in question does not belong to any description of men whatever, in those places which the Gospel has not visited, or, in other words, where it is not preached: it being very clear, that it is intended to *succeed*, and not *precede* the publication of the Gospel.

2. Nor does it belong to any, even where the Gospel is preached, that are still in point of *age*, or *understanding*, incapable of believing and embracing it: the Gospel being evidently the dispensation of manhood and knowledge, and not that of infancy and insanity.—Its *ordinances*, any more than its *doctrines*, do not belong to such as have not attained to the use of reason.

3. Nor can this ordinance appertain to any, even of those who are, in point of age and understanding, capable of believing and embracing a preached Gospel, unless it should also appear that they do indeed, cordially believe and embrace the same: it being perfectly clear, that personal knowledge, conviction, and faith, form the very basis of gospel obedience, or evangelical practice, in every point of view.

4. Of

* See WAKEFIELD'S *Plain and Short Account of the Nature of Baptism*. Chap. i.

4. Of course, we may safely class among the anti-christian usages, the baptizing of new born babes, who not only cannot give the slightest evidence of their belief of the gospel, but who also must be, as every rational man will readily allow, utterly incapable of such belief.

That new born infants cannot be proper subjects of the Christian ordinance of baptism, and that this ordinance can belong only to those adults who make a credible profession of faith in Christ, may be further argued and illustrated,

1. From the very nature of Christianity. Such is evidently the genius of that holy religion, that none but those who appear to understand the Divine Record, can be proper subjects of its ordinances. The whole tenor of the New Testament revelation affords a clear and ample proof of this fact. Hence, *believing* the apostolic report, being *taught*, and made *disciples*, are expressly connected with *baptism*, as what should take place in all the subjects previously to their admission to that ordinance. So likewise, the *remembrance* of Christ, *discerning* the Lord's body, and *examining* themselves, are, in the most express manner, required of all those who partake of the *Lord's Supper*. The case is evidently similar, as to all other evangelical observances. It is well known that all christians are denominated, the *children of God*; but it is also plainly declared, that it is *by faith* in Jesus Christ they are so. They are likewise described, as having obtained like precious faith with the Apostles, as begotten of God with the word of truth—as *begotten again* unto a lively *hope*, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead—as *born again* not of corruptible, but of incorruptible seed, *by the word of God*—as become *new creatures*, and having put on the *new man*, which is renewed in *knowledge*, after the image of him who created him: Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free; but Christ is all and in all. All which expressions necessarily and evidently imply, that nothing short of the know,

knowledge and belief and power of the Gospel, can constitute a man a real Christian, or make him a proper subject of Gospel ordinances. In short, it plainly appears, that the New Testament considers none as belonging to Christ's kingdom, or fit subjects of his ordinances, but those who confess with the mouth the Lord Jesus, and believe with the heart that God raised him from the dead; to whom the word is nigh, even in their mouths and in their hearts. That prophetic representation is here applicable and decisive, where the people of the New Covenant, to whom alone the ordinances of the Gospel belong, are represented as having the Divine Law put into their minds, and written in their hearts, and, as all knowing God, from the least to the greatest. Nothing can be more in point than this description, and it must also be quite conclusive in favour of my argument, as it is evidently characteristic of the true disciples of Christ, and the approved subjects of his ordinances, throughout all periods of the Gospel dispensation, as well as at that glorious future season when the Jews shall be converted, and when all nations shall submit to the Son of God.

2. The language of *our Lord's Commission*, by representing the proper subjects of baptism as *hearers* and *believers* of the Apostolic report, necessarily and effectually refutes the doctrine of Infant baptism.—“Preach the Gospel to every creature—Teach all nations, *baptizing them*.” Baptizing who?—Those, undoubtedly, who receive your doctrine—Those with whom your *preaching* appears to meet with credit and acceptance; and none else. The Commission is the *law* of baptism; and as it does not so much as mention infants, or any who are incapable of attending to the gospel report, we may very safely conclude that the ordinance cannot belong to them.

3. The whole tenor of *our Lord's Ministry*, as well as *that of John the Baptist*, will also serve to corroborate and establish the principle which I maintain, That the doctrine of infant baptism is not from Heaven but of men.

men. Their plan was, to *make disciples*, AND THEN *baptize them*: Not to baptize them first, and disciple them afterwards; nor yet to disciple them *by baptizing them*, as some have most absurdly and stupidly pleaded. The words in John iv. 1. most clearly distinguish between *discipling*, or *making disciples*, and *baptizing*. And it is well known, that the very term *disciple*, necessarily implies, not only one who is actually under tuition, but even, one who has already, in some measure, imbibed the principles, or doctrine of his Master.—That memorable declaration of our Lord (Luke xiv. 27.) fully coincides with this, “That whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after him, cannot be his *disciple*.” for it is a certain truth, that to bear Christ’s cross, and follow him, can result from nothing short of the *knowledge*, cordial *reception*, and saving *influence*, or energy of his *doctrine*.

4. The constant and uniform *practice of the Apostles*, appears entirely to have corresponded to what has been observed, relating to the *Ministry and Commission* of our Lord Jesus Christ. For they began with *preaching*, in order to *persuade and teach* men; or, in other words, to *disciple* them; in consequence of which they admitted them to *baptism*.—So Peter did on the day of *Pentecost*: he began by *preaching*; and such as were *discipled* under the sermon, or, as the Evangelist expresses it, they that gladly *received his word*, WERE BAPTIZED.—The self same method did Philip also observe among the *Samaritans*, Acts viii. He too, began by *preaching* Christ unto them: And when they appeared to have been *converted*, or *discipled*, or, in other words, *When they believed Philip, preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized both men and women*.—Note! there is not the least hint dropt about their *infants*. May it not, therefore, be from hence fairly concluded, that Philip must have been totally ignorant of the doctrine of *infant baptism*?—The story of the Ethiopian Eunuch exhibits likewise, exactly, the very same order or method. Philip began by *preaching unto him Jesus*. Nor did

did he offer, or consent to *baptize* him, till it appeared that he had been so affected by the preaching, as really to become a disciple of Christ: or, to speak more agreeably to the language of the Evangelist, till he was perfectly satisfied, from his own conduct and confession, that he *believed with all his heart that Jesus Christ was the Son of God*.—The whole history of the Apostolic ministrations appears perfectly to coincide, or harmonize with the above instances. Not the smallest hint has been dropt in the New Testament, that the Apostles ever administered baptism to *babes*: Nor is the slightest evidence to be found there, that they considered that ordinance, any more than the *Lord's Supper*, as appertaining to them.—Even where the baptism of whole families or *households*, is mentioned, we constantly meet with expressions which plainly indicate, that infants or babes were not included among the baptized:—such as, that they *magnified God*, had their *hearts purified by faith*, were *comforted*, *believed in God*, *rejoiced*, *believed on the Lord*, addicted themselves to the *ministry of the Saints*, &c.

5. Had the doctrine of Infant baptism been from Heaven, it might very naturally and reasonably be expected, that our Lord would have declared, or at least intimated as much, when *the little children* were brought to him. (Matt. xix. Mark x. Luke xviii.) But it is very certain that he neither commanded them to be baptized, nor gave the smallest intimation, or dropt the slightest hint, of their having any manner of right to that ordinance. He treated them, indeed, with the most affectionate tenderness; and, without all doubt, it behoves us to shew towards our little ones a similar disposition: but as he did not, in the mean time, order them to be baptized, or give any intimation that they were proper subjects of that ordinance (although there was then, evidently, the fairest opportunity for him so to do) we may, surely, with the greatest safety conclude, that this same doctrine of infant baptism can be none of his.

6. Such

6. Such expressions as *walking in newness of life*, *putting on Christ*, and, *the answer of a good conscience*, being, in scripture, connected with the administration of baptism, and ascribed to its subjects, is another good proof, that infants, or babes, were not among those who were admitted to that ordinance in the primitive times: since no walking in newness of life, nor the putting on of Christ, nor yet the answer, or exercise of a good conscience, could, with any degree of reason or propriety, be expected from them.—Not any thing more absurd, or incompatible with their character or capacity, would it be, to speak of their *discerning the Lord's body*, and *examining themselves*.

7. The *concessions* of many of the most eminent and celebrated *Pædobaptists*, in their cool and sober moments, may be urged as another very good and conclusive argument against the validity of infant baptism.

“It cannot be proved, by the sacred scripture (says LUTHER) that infant baptism was instituted by Christ, or begun by the first christians after the Apostles.” In A. R. Van. Inf. Bapt. part. ii. pa. 8.

CALVIN also acknowledges, that it is not expressly declared by the Evangelists, that the Apostles ever baptized any *infants*. (Inst. b. iv. c. xvi. § 8.

ZWINGLIUS and MELANCTHON, according to WILLS, made the same kind of acknowledgment. Inf. bapt. asserted and vindicated. P. 2 c. 2. p. 37, 40, 199, 200,

ERASMUS (according to the last mentioned writer) seems to have been of the same opinion, when he said ‘That if any one doubted the fact, of the baptism of infants being instituted by the Apostles, he ought *not* to be *condemned*. WILLS, as before, P. II. p. 39, 40.

THE MAGDEBURG CENTURIATORS also allow, that no examples of the baptism of infants occur in the *first age*. Cent. I. L. II. C. vi. p. 381.

BAXTER says, “If there can be no *example* given in Scripture, of any one that was baptized without the profession of saving faith, nor any *precept* for so doing; then must we not baptize any without it. But the

E antecedent

antecedent is true ; therefore so is the consequent—
In a word, I know of no word in scripture that giveth
us the least intimation that ever man was baptized
without the profession of saving faith, or that giveth
the least encouragement to baptize any upon another
faith." *Disp. of Right to Sacr.* p. 149. 151.

LIMBORCH freely acknowledges, " that there is no
express command for Infant baptism in Scripture ; and
that all those passages wherein baptism is commanded,
do immediately relate to *adult* persons, since they are
ordered to be instructed, and faith is pre-requisite as a
necessary qualification, which are peculiar to the *adult*
alone. There is no instance (he adds) that can be
produced, from whence it may indisputably be in-
ferred, that any child was baptized by the Apostles.
The necessity of Pædobaptism was never asserted by
any council before that of *Carthage*, held in the year
418.—Since there are no marks in antiquity, before
the said Council, of the necessity of Infant Baptism,
there is no reason why at present it should be held as
necessary." *Compl. Syst. Div.* vol ii. p. 740.

BP. BURNET says, that there is no *express precept* or
rule given in the New Testament for the baptism of
infants. *Exp.* 39. *Art.* p. 383.

BP. STILLINGFLEET asserts, that it is not set down
in *express words*, whether baptism shall be administered
to infants or no, but is left to be gathered by analogy
and consequences. *Irenicum* P. II. C. iv. p. 178.

DR. WATTS seems to have entirely given up the
divine authority of Infant Baptism, when he told his
friend Dr. GIBBONS, that he had not observed any be-
nefit arising from the administration of Baptism to in-
fants. See *Dr. GIBBONS' Letter*, in *CARTER'S Re-*
marks on a late Publication, p. 94.

MR. PALMER of *Hackney*, grants, that there is no-
thing in the words of the institution, nor in any after
accounts of the administration of this rite, respecting
the baptism of infants : there is not (says he) a *single pre-*
cept for, nor *example* of this practice through the whole
New Testament." *Prot. Diff. Ans. to Dr. PRIESTLEY'S*
Free Address on the L. S. p. 7. Other

Other Pædobaptists, of no small eminence, have delivered as their clear opinion, that Infant baptism was entirely unknown in the days of the Apostles.

“ The baptism of infants in the *two first centuries* after Christ (says CURCELLÆUS) was *altogether unknown*; but in the third and fourth was allowed by *some few*. In the fifth and following ages it was generally received.—The custom of baptizing infants did not begin before the *third* age after Christ was born. In the former ages no trace of it appears—and it was introduced without the command of Christ.” Inst. Rel. Christ. L. 1. C. xii. Diss. Secund. de Peccat. orig. §. 56.

SALMASIUS and SUICERUS affirm, that in the *two first centuries*, no one was baptized, except, being instructed in the faith, and acquainted with the doctrine of Christ, he was able to profess himself a believer.” Quoted by Booth, Pæd. Exam. 1. Edit. p. 194.

The late Dr. JORTIN, one of the most learned and respectable names among the British Pædobaptists, was evidently of opinion, that the Scripture is totally silent about infant baptism; and that there are not any traces to be found of that usage till sometime after the Apostolic age.—See *Jortin's Rem. on Eccl. Hist.* vol. 1, p. 245.

“ From this time [the close of the second century, says professor FORMEY of Berlin] they baptized *infants* as well as adults.” *Eccl. Hist.* vol. 1. p. 33.

I will close this list of Pædobaptist names, with those of BOSSUET and COURAYER, two of the most learned and eminent members of the Romish Church; the former of the *last*, and the latter of the *present* century.

BOSSUET expresses himself thus—“ JESUS CHRIST has said *Teach and Baptize*; and again, *He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved*. But the CHURCH, *solely by the Authority of Tradition and Custom*, has so interpreted those words, that the *instruction and faith* which CHRIST *had joined with baptism*, might be *separated from it in the case of infants*.” In STEN. 2g. Rus. p. 179.

COURAYER's words are as follows—"The Baptism of Infants (says he) is of great antiquity in the Church. It is even perhaps, the antiquity of this practice that gave rise to the idea of original sin, taken in the sense of the Theologians, for a guilt that drags all mankind who die without baptism, to damnation. This belief once established, has contributed indirectly to make the baptism of infants be judged necessary to their salvation; for if they had been considered as entirely pure and innocent, why, as Tertullian says, should we be so anxious to apply baptism for the remission of their sins? *Ut quid festinat innocens ætas ad remissionem peccatorum.* I do not see however, that Jesus Christ, or his Apostles, have prescribed for them this baptism, which he seems only to have established to reclaim adults to repentance, and to the reception of the gospel, and in order to purify them thereby, from the sins of which they had been guilty before. I do not in fact find any thing in Scripture, that obliges us to extend to infants the necessity of baptism. It does not even appear after the practice was introduced, that it was judged as it is now, of necessity, since it was very common then, to defer the reception of this Sacrament to an advanced age, and even till death. By speaking in this manner, it is not my intention, to censure a practice so ancient, and so general, as that of baptizing infants; but I would not for all this, consider it as an error in those, who believe baptism to be necessary to Adults only."—See COURAYER's *Declarat. of his last Sentiments*, p. 68, 69, 70.

No one, I hope, will think me to blame for having thus availed myself of the voluntary concessions of my opponents, seeing that the Scriptures themselves have amply sanctioned such a mode of proceeding.—The inspired Evangelists have not hesitated to introduce the very Dæmons, sometimes, as vouchers or witnesses, for the divine character and doctrine of their Master Jesus.—The declaration which a *Sorceress*, or one who had a familiar spirit, had made in favour of christianity, has been recorded by Luke.—The same Evangelist makes

a similar use of the testimony of a *Roman Centurion*—And Paul has referred to the writings of the *Pagan Poets*, by way of confirmation of the doctrine which he preached. Matt. viii. 29. Mark i. 24, and iii. 11, and v. 6, 7. Luke iv. 41. Acts xix. 15.—Acts xvi. 17.—Luke xxiii. 47.—Acts xvii. 28.

On these accounts, my brethren, I trust I shall stand fully justified in having attempted to invalidate your principles by the unbiassed concessions of some of the most eminent writers of your party. In truth, I must needs think, that the doctrine of infant sprinkling can have but a most miserable foundation, when so many of the most learned and able of its advocates have been obliged, in their most sober and dispassionate moments, or, as I may say, in cool blood, so to express themselves concerning it.—On the other hand, had not the evidence on our side of the question appeared to them exceedingly clear and conclusive indeed, it can hardly be supposed that they should have felt themselves constrained to make such unqualified and unequivocal concessions in our favour.

On this head it must be quite needless further to enlarge; I shall now, therefore, proceed to shew,

THIRDLY, What is the *import* and *design* of Baptism; or, What that doctrine really is, which this Ordinance is intended to hold forth.

Every thing in Christianity, my brethren, proceeds from, and points to God:—that God who is light, and in whom is no darkness at all. Christianity is, throughout, an illuminating and instructive religion. It exhibits a vast series of important facts, and every single fact presents some interesting doctrine—some doctrine appertaining to, or calculated for our present and eternal welfare. Nothing arbitrary, insignificant, useless, or uninteresting, is there to be found. Its *Ordinances*, of course, must be of a significant, instructive, and interesting nature: that is, they must necessarily contain some salutary doctrine—some doctrine highly worthy of their blessed author, and eminently conducive

cive of the benefit of those for whom they are intended. *Baptism*, for instance, must be so considered. The New Testament, to which it appertains, may be expected, not only to point out the rite itself, in a clear and distinct manner, together with the character of the persons to whom it belongs (both of which we have already considered) but also to describe the very doctrine it is intended to exhibit, or convey. And this is what now demands our serious and diligent investigation.

This is a branch of the subject (says a very worthy and judicious writer*) which has been too little attended to by many. The universal practice of sprinkling infants, with the principles adopted and arguments used in support of that human invention, have not only set aside the *subjects* and *form* of Christ's institution, but in a great measure obscured and perverted its *signification*; so that it is amazing to observe the ignorance which prevails among professors on this head, though they have the New Testament in their hands. Some look upon it as little more than the ceremony of giving a *name* to their child. Many consider it as a *Christening*, or making them christians: hence their anxiety to have them sprinkled betimes lest they should die pagans. Others who pretend to more knowledge, view it as a sign whereby their infants are *initiated* into the *visible church*: although they are neither agreed as to what that Church is, nor admit them into the full communion of any one visible church. They also look upon it as the seal of some *covenant*, which they say is made with a believer and his natural seed: yet they are not agreed as to the nature of that imaginary covenant, or whether it entails salvation, or only a right to some outward privileges. Many view it as the parent's *dedication* of his child to God, accompanied with a *vow* or *engagement* to bring it up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; while others, disclaiming dedications, vows, and engagements, make it to be a sign to the *parent*, that Christ is as *able* to save his child as himself, and that he must enter the kingdom

* Mr. McLean.

kingdom of God as destitute of any *good* qualification as his infant. Thus every one annexes a signification to baptism agreeable to his own favourite hypothesis, whilst all of them have been accommodated to the baptism of infants. But as the Scripture contains no such institution, so neither does it give us any of the above views as the design of baptism.—If we consult the Word of God, we shall find that this sacred ordinance is intended,

1. To be a sign or symbol of *regeneration*, or that the person baptized is *born of the Spirit*. Our Lord says to Nicodemus, “Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.” *Water* here undoubtedly means the water of baptism, for it is distinguished from the *Spirit*; so that to be *born of water* is to be baptized, even as to be *born of the Spirit* is to be regenerated: and as the former is connected with the latter, and termed a *birth* with reference to it, it must be the visible sign or representation of the spiritual birth. This is further evident from Tit. iii. 5. “According to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost.” Two things are here pointed at. One is baptism, called *the washing*, or rather *laver* (LOUTRON) of *regeneration*, because it is the sign of regeneration: The other is regeneration itself, or the *renewing of the Holy Ghost*, which is the thing signified in baptism. Our Lord makes this ordinance necessary to our entering into the kingdom of God; which implies at least, that as none can *really* enter that kingdom without being born of the Spirit; so none can *visibly* enter it without being born of water: nor indeed have they ground to think that they shall enter it in any sense, if they wilfully despise this ordinance, and throw contempt upon the authority of its Institutor, which is expressly declared to be no less than “rejecting the counsel of God against themselves.” (Luke vii. 29, 30.)

2. It represents to the believer the *remission* or *washing away of his sins*. Accordingly Peter says to the convicted

convicted Jews, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins." Ananias, in his address to Paul expresses this still more strongly: "Why tarriest thou? (says he) Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord." This manner of speaking will appear very extravagant to many now-a-days, who look upon baptism as a mere empty rite, or arbitrary precept. To be baptized *for the remission* or *washing away of sins*, plainly imports, that in baptism the remission of sins is represented as *really conferred* upon the believer. The Gospel promises in general, "that through Christ's name, whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins." (Acts x. 43.) Baptism applies this promise, and represents its *actual accomplishment* to every individual believer; assuring him, that all his past sins are now as really washed away, as his body is washed in water.—Peter calls baptism (ANTITUPON) the *antitype* of the salvation of Noah and his family from water by the lifting up of the ark, while he also contrasts it with the ceremonial cleansings which sanctified only to the purifying of the flesh. His words are "The antitype of which, baptism, doth also now save us, (not the putting away the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience towards God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ; who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God," &c. 1 Pet. iii. 21, 22.

Baptism considered as a *washing* or *cleansing*, represents both our *justification* from the guilt of sin by the blood of Christ, and our *sanctification* from its inherent pollution and power by his word and Spirit: hence both the *justifying* efficacy of Christ's *death*, or his having *given himself* for the Church, and also the *sanctifying* influence of his *word* believed, are represented in Eph. v. 25, 26, 27. as implied in, or signified by *baptism*, or as it is there expressed *the washing of water*, or, as the words might, perhaps, be more properly rendered, *the laver of water*.

Having

Having now considered baptism as it represents a *washing* or *cleansing*, it must be here observed, that that is not the only, nor yet the principal import of this ordinance. It holds forth the believer's connection with Christ, in a manner still more close, striking, and complete, than any thing included in that idea. For,

3. It exhibits the *death*, *burial*, and *resurrection* of Christ, whereby he fulfilled all righteousness, together with the Christian's *communion* with, and *conformity* to him therein. This the Apostle expressly declares and insists upon, Rom. vi. 3, 4. "So many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death. Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." &c. He gives the same view of it in Col. ii. 12, 13. "Buried with him in baptism, wherein also you are risen with him, through the faith of the operation of God, who raised him from the dead. And you being dead in your sins, and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with Christ, having forgiven you all trespasses."—From these passages we learn,

(1.) That baptism represents Christ's *death*, *burial* and *resurrection*; and so exhibits, in a figure, what the Gospel declares by way of testimony; namely, "That he was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification." Rom. vi. 25.—His own baptism also seemed to represent this; as may be concluded from the reason he assigns for it to John: "Suffer it to be so now; for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness:" as much as to say, "Permit me to be baptized; for my baptism is a figure of the work which I have undertaken to finish; for *in like manner* as I am buried under, and raised again out of the water, *even so* it becometh me to fulfil all righteousness by dying and rising again from the dead." Accordingly, this being transacted in a figure, the whole exhibition was completed when he (ANEBE) ascended up from the water, and the Holy Spirit descended up-

on him, accompanied with the Father's voice from heaven, announcing him his beloved Son, and declaring his good pleasure in him; which was verified at his resurrection from the dead, and ascension to the right hand of God. The mystery of Christ's baptism, therefore, appears to be this:—The *water* which is the emblem of distress, and an instrument of suffocation and death, denoted affliction and pain, and the extinction or deprivation of life, the wages of Sin.—His *immersion* under water signified his being a man of sorrows, his bearing his people's grief, and dying for them.—His *emergence* or rising again out of the water, represented his resurrection from the dead, wherein he was justified or acquitted, as having satisfied all demands, fulfilled all righteousness, and also obtained eternal life, dominion, and glory, as the reward of his obedience unto death.—This appears to be the mystery of his baptism, concerning which he says, "I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!" Luke xii. 50. From the forecited passages we also learn,

(2.) That the baptism of believers represents their *union and communion with Christ* in his death, burial, and resurrection. The expressions "baptized into his death—buried with him in baptism—wherein ye are also risen with him," evidently imply that they were most peculiarly interested in his dying and rising again; or, were so comprehended in, and accounted one with him, as to have died in his death, been buried in his burial, and raised again in his resurrection: And that now, upon their believing the gospel, this is signified to them by their baptism, wherein Christ's death, burial, and resurrection, are reacted in a figure, upon their own persons.

As to *Communion with Christ in his DEATH*, the Apostle says, "We are dead to sin—dead with Christ:—and that our old man was crucified with him." (Rom. vi. 2, 8, 6.) These, certainly, are not empty or unmeaning, but are, doubtless, very significant expressions; and must imply, that christians are so deeply

ly interested in their Lord's death, and so intimately connected with him therein, as that the subjugation of of their old corrupt nature, or the mortification of sin in them, both as to its guilt, whereby they are liable to condemnation, and as to its indwelling power, by which it has infected their whole constitution, and subjected them to its service, is in fact derived from that source.

And as to *Communion with Christ in his RESURRECTION*, the same Apostle says, "God hath quickened us *together with Christ*, and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places *in Christ Jesus*." (Eph. ii. 4—7.)—Here the communion, or intimate connection of believers with Christ in his *resurrection*, or their vital interest therein, is very clearly pointed out: so that when Christ was raised up from the dead to the enjoyment of eternal life and glory, they also are represented as being then quickened and raised up *together with him*, being included *in him* as their head. Accordingly Christians are exhorted to reckon themselves thus connected with Christ in his living, or resurrection, as well as in his dying: "For in that he died, he died unto sin once; but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God (EN) IN JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD." (Rom. vi. 10, 11.) And this reckoning answers to what was just before declared to be the import of their baptism: (verse 3, 4.) for their burial in, and rising again out of the water, exhibited what Christ underwent, not singly, but as involving or comprehending them; or as passing upon themselves, even as if they had undergone it in their own persons. Such is the intimate connection between Christ and his members in his dying and rising, and such is the reckoning which believers are called to make of their baptism.—As the effect of this,

(3.) Baptism also imports the believer's *spiritual conformity to Christ's death and resurrection* by dying unto sin, and rising again unto a new life of holiness. This

is a necessary consequence of the former, an essential and important branch of the salvation by Christ, and produced by a communication of his Spirit, whereby they are made to perceive, believe, and love the truth, and so to fall under its habitual and prevailing influence. It consists of two things; the *mortification* of sin, or putting off the old man with its lusts and deeds; and a *resurrection* to a new spiritual life, or putting on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and holiness of the truth.

That immersion represents the *death* or *mortification* of sin, is clear from the passages already mentioned. The chief scope of the Apostle in Rom. vi. is to shew, that believers must not continue in sin that grace may abound; for, says he, "how shall we that are dead to sin live any longer therein," namely, in our own persons, as was the case before we knew the grace of God in truth?—The mortification of sin is also held forth in Col. ii. 11, 12. "In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ; buried with him in baptism," &c. The "body of the sins of the flesh" is the whole frame of indwelling sin, which is both influenced by the fleshly body, and also exerts itself by means of it, using its members as instruments in fulfilling its various desires and lusts. To be governed by this body of sin is to be *in the flesh*, to mind the things of the flesh, and to live after the flesh; and such are termed (ΨΥΧΙΚΟΙ) *soulish, animal, or sensual*, in opposition to their being spiritual, or having the Spirit. 1 Cor. ii. 14. Jude 19.

Our *reviviscence*, or *resurrection* to a new life of holiness, in conformity to Christ's resurrection from the dead, and by virtue derived from it, is also represented in baptism by our rising again out of the water. This view of it is likewise held forth in the forecited texts: "We are buried with him by baptism into death, that *like as Christ was raised up from the dead* by the glory of the Father, *EVEN so we also should walk in newness of life.*"

life.—Answerable to this import of baptism, the Apostle exhorts believers to “Yield themselves unto God as those that are alive from the dead; and their members as instruments of righteousness unto God.” In his epistle to the Colossians, having shewn that they were “buried with Christ in baptism,” he adds, “wherein also you are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God who hath raised him from the dead. And you being dead in your sins, and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses.” This explains the nature of our spiritual resurrection with Christ in baptism; it is “through faith,” or believing on God as having raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead, who was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification: (Rom. iv. 24, 25.) And this faith is “of the operation of God,” which is mentioned either as the productive cause of *faith* itself, according to Matthew, xvi. 17. or of *Christ’s resurrection*, as in Ephesians, i. 19, 20. and which is represented as the principal object of faith in Rom. x. 9. When therefore the Holy Spirit, which quickened Christ, makes men perceive the import and evidence of the Gospel-testimony respecting Christ’s death and resurrection, so as to *believe* it in their heart as the testimony of God, then they who were dead in their sins by a legal sentence of condemnation, and also in the uncircumcision of their flesh by the dominion of the body of sin, are quickened together with him; being not only forgiven all their former trespasses, but also furnished (by the belief of the Gospel) with the principles of a new life of holiness. For such is the nature of the Gospel-testimony, that if we believe it, it must produce in our minds *peace* with God, *joy* in him, and the *hope* of his glory: And this must be attended with *love* to him for his great love therein commended towards sinners. And as the life which we now begin to live in the flesh is not by our own righteousness, but by the faith of the Son of God, who loved us and gave himself for us; so this love of Christ will

will constrain us to love him, “ because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead ; and that he died for all, that they who live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him who died for them and rose again.” (2 Cor. v. 14, 15.)

(4.) Baptism ultimately signifies the death of this mortal body, and our resurrection from the dead to inherit eternal life ; which is our complete conformity to Christ, who was “ put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit.”

As to the death of the body, it has been already observed, that immersion represents a death and burial, which imports an entire extinction of life, and so signifies, not a partial, but total destruction of the body of sin ; and that not merely as to its reigning power over us, but also as to its very being and existence in us. It represents our putting it off, as we put off this earthly tabernacle by death. Now this will never be fully accomplished until we actually put off the body itself, in which it remains as a law in the members warring against the law of the mind : for while believers are in this life, “ the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh ; and these are contrary the one to the other ; so that they cannot do the things that they would.”—As, therefore, immersion signifies the entire destruction of indwelling sin, it must refer ultimately to the death of the mortal body, when those words shall be verified not only in their spiritual, but even in their full and literal sense, “ He that is dead is freed from sin”—“ He that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin.” Rom. vi. 7. 1 Pet. iv. 1.—Christ’s immersion in Jordan was a figure of his being put to death in the flesh, as well as his being quickened by the Spirit, in allusion to which he terms his death a baptism : And as he informs Nicodemus, that a man must be born of water in order to his entering the kingdom of God, he also intimates to his disciples, that they must undergo the baptism of death before they can enjoy the honours and happiness of his glorious kingdom ; for flesh and blood cannot inherit it.—Matt. xx. 22, 23. 1 Cor. xv. 50. That

That Baptism also signifies the resurrection of the saints from the dead to inherit eternal life with Christ, is plain from 1 Cor. xv. 29. "Else what shall they do who are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? why then are they baptized for the dead?" Some among the Corinthians denied the resurrection of the dead. This error, the Apostle shews, subverted the whole gospel which he had preached unto them; implied that Christ himself was not risen, and consequently that they were yet in their sins; and even that they who had fallen asleep in Christ had perished. In the words above quoted he intimates, that by denying the resurrection they set aside the crowning design of their baptism, and rendered it of no consequence, making it merely a baptism *for the dead*; that is, for, or in the name of Christ, considered only as in the state of the dead, without any reference to his having risen as the first fruits of them that slept, or to their own resurrection in consequence of that: whereas baptism represents not only Christ's death and burial, but also his rising again from the dead, and our resurrection by him.

It has been already observed, that baptism is the sign of *regeneration*, as the word is commonly taken for conversion or the new birth, according to John iii. 3, 5. But the scripture sense of the word (*paliggenesia*) REGENERATION is more comprehensive. It occurs but in two places of the New Testament; in one of which it evidently signifies the resurrection of the just, or the restitution of all things.—Thus when our Lord says to his disciples, "Ye who have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of Man shall sit on the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel."—as much as to say, Ye, my Apostles, who have forsaken all and followed me in this world, shall in the regeneration, or at the resurrection, and in my glorious kingdom which shall then commence, sit upon twelve thrones, &c. The resurrection is a regeneration in the most proper sense, and is that to which our baptism and spiritual regeneration

regeneration ultimately refer; for he saves us by the washing or laver of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost—that we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life. (Tit. iii. 5.) Though believers are now the adopted sons of God, and born again of incorruptible seed by the word of God, yet still they are waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of their body, when they shall be regenerated from death, in conformity to Christ the first begotten of the dead, and be the children of God as the children of the resurrection. Rom. viii. 23. Rev. i. 5. Luke xx. 36.

From the foregoing considerations relating to the *import* and *design* of baptism, it is, I presume, sufficiently evident, That this divine ordinance is a sign of spiritual *regeneration*, or the new birth, without which we cannot enter into the kingdom of God:—Of the *washing away of sin*, both as to its guilt and pollution, or of justification and sanctification; and especially that it represents the *death, burial, and resurrection* of Christ, as the ground of hope—the believer's *union and communion* with him therein—his *spiritual conformity* to him, in dying unto sin and rising to a new life of holiness—and his full and *complete conformity* to him in the death of his mortal body, and in his resurrection to a heavenly and immortal life from the dead.†

Baptism then, my brethren, is a very significant, and by no means an unmeaning institution, as too many seem to think it. It is indeed pregnant with the richest meaning. It holds forth doctrines of the most salutary and interesting nature, and is graciously appointed and eminently calculated to strengthen the faith,

† Under this last head, which treats of the Import and Design of Baptism, much use has been made of Mr. McLean's judicious observations on that same subject, which coincided so far with the Author's ideas that he generally did little more than abridge what that worthy Writer had advanced. Indeed he despaired of rendering greater justice to the subject, or yet of serving the reader more effectually, either by altering the arrangement or by attempting to improve the language.

faith, confirm the hopes, excite the love, and promote the holiness and consolation of believers, for whom only it is intended, and who alone can reap any benefit from it.

I beg leave to conclude this Discourse with a few thoughts upon that question concerning Baptism, which relates to the extent and duration, or perpetuity, of its obligation.

Some have affirmed that the instruction or rule contained in our Lord's Commission to his Apostles Matt. xxviii. and Mark xvi. does not relate to *water*-baptism, but to that of the *Spirit*, which they are pleased to call, by way of pre-eminence, *the baptism of Christ*: but it is a sufficient confutation of this notion, that the Apostles understood the said Commission as relating to *water*-baptism, and *practised accordingly*; and that whenever they speak of the baptism of the Spirit they do not refer to the above passages as containing any declaration, or the least indication concerning it, but appear to have in view quite another portion of their Master's Sayings, and expressed in a very different style. Hence *Peter* in his account of what happened in the house of *Cornelius*, says, "the Holy Ghost fell on them, as on us at the beginning. Then remembered I" (not the words of the above mentioned passages, but) "the word of the Lord, how that he said, John indeed baptized with water, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost."

The baptism of the Holy Ghost and of fire, and likewise that of affliction or suffering, are only metaphorical baptisms, or baptisms in a figurative sense; and they acquire that name from the Ordinance under consideration, or the Christian rite of Immersion, or being overwhelmed in water. This being an established ordinance of the Gospel, and forming a leading and prominent part of the Christian service, it was very natural to denominate the extraordinary communication of Spiritual gifts, which took place soon

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after our Lord's ascension, as well as the afflictions and sufferings of Christ and his people, *a baptism*—that is, in a metaphorical sense, or by way of allusion to the above-mentioned Ordinance.

The very *style* of our Lord's Commission sufficiently shews that he is not speaking metaphorically—"Teach all nations, baptizing them"—"Preach the Gospel to every creature: he that believeth and is baptized, &c." The language here is very different from what it is when he is speaking of a metaphorical baptism—Then, as might be expected, he adopts the proper metaphorical style: He asks his disciples, If they are able to be baptized with *the baptism* that he is baptized with? And he tells them, they should be baptized with *the baptism* that he is baptized with. He likewise says, I have *a baptism* to be baptized with, and how am I straitened [or *pained*] till it be accomplished! Also a little before his ascension, speaking to his disciples of the Father's promise, which they had heard of him, he says, "Ye shall be baptized *with* [or *in*] *the Holy Ghost* not many days hence." John the Baptist also, speaking of the additional, and superior benefits which our Lord would confer, compared with those derived from his ministry, says "He shall baptize you with [or *in*] the Holy Ghost and fire."—In all these passages a metaphorical baptism is clearly seen: in the former the baptism of pain and suffering, where Christ and his disciples are represented as sinking in deep waters, and overwhelmed by mighty floods; and in the latter, the baptism of the Spirit, or the superabundant communication of spiritual gifts, which took place after our Lord's ascension, and resembled a mighty overflowing stream, where his disciples were immersed and consecrated for his service.

Inasmuch then, as our Lord's Commission unquestionably refers to the Ordinance of Baptism, or Immersion in Water, in the Name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, it must follow, that that ordinance was certainly enjoined on the primitive Christians.—The question which now remains to be considered

considered is, How far that obligation extended, or How long was it to continue?

Some have taken upon them to assert and plead, that it could be binding only on the first converts from Judaism and Paganism, or any other false religion, and not on their descendants; but the words, and obvious tenour of the Commission, as recorded by Matthew, manifestly contradict this. Water-baptism is there evidently connected with the other precepts of the Gospel, so that they ought to stand or fall together. It is there as clear as any thing need to be, that the duty or obligation of baptism, as well as of all other precepts which Christ had commanded, was to continue in full force, or be binding on all his disciples, *to the end of the world*.—"Teach all nations, baptizing them," said the risen Saviour, to whom all power was given in heaven and in earth, "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo I am with you alway even to the end of the world. Amen."—Here the promise of his presence, aid, and support, *to the end of the world*, is evidently commensurate with the duty or obligation to enforce and observe his precepts—and *baptism* among the rest.

Those who plead that baptism is not binding upon the descendants of Christian parents, not only maintain what the scripture evidently contradicts, but seem also to have quite forgotten that Christianity is a *personal* religion, and can by no means be taken up by *proxy*. To suppose that a man may practice evangelical obedience, or observe a Gospel ordinance for, or in the room of his posterity, so as to supercede the necessity of their doing in their own persons what otherwise would have been their bounden duty, would be to suppose what is absolutely repugnant to both the letter and the spirit of the Christian religion.

Personal Christianity originates in the belief of the Gospel; that belief is followed by a confession of the same; and that confession or profession of faith in Christ, is evidently connected with, and ought never to

to be separated from baptism, wherein the believer is solemnly introduced or admitted among the disciples of Christ.—This ordinance appears to have been originally observed for the purpose of *putting on Christ*, or that the persons baptized might thereby take upon them *his Name*. Hence we read of being baptized *in*, or *into* the *Name of the Lord Jesus*, and of *putting on Christ*, in that ordinance. (Acts viii. 16. Gal. iii. 27.) Now this must, certainly, be the common concern of all Christians—those of the present day, as well as those of the first age—those who are descended from Christian parents, as well as those who come over to Christianity from Judaism, Paganism, or any other false religion. There is therefore no room to imagine that the law of baptism is become obsolete: nor can there be any just reason to distinguish, as to the duty or obligation of being baptized, between the first converts to Christianity and their believing descendants.

Upon the whole, as water-baptism is in the Commission evidently connected with the *preaching* and *belief* and *profession* of the Gospel, we may venture to conclude and assert, that while preaching the Gospel continues to be a duty, it will also continue to be the duty of all who embrace or believe that Gospel, to make a public and solemn profession of the same, and on that profession to be baptized in (or into) the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

Finally, my brethren, may the God of Mercy and Truth lead us into the knowledge and observance of all things whatsoever our Saviour has commanded, that we may inherit the promise of His being with us alway even to the End of the World. Amen.

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